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Current Literature.

Did the Hebrews Borrow Their Ideas from Babylon?

One of the most interesting questions is the extent to which Hebrew thought was influenced by Assyro-Babylonian ideas. Dr. Winckler in the new edition of Schrader's *Cuneiform Inscriptions and the Old Testament* sets forth the theory that the Babylonian influence was controlling in the literature of Israel and Judah, and that there was present everywhere in Hebrew thought the Babylonian doctrine that all things move according to the laws of the stars, and all things earthly are counterparts of the heavenly. Even Yahwistic monotheism had its origin in the highly developed Babylonian polytheism. Von Gall, in an article in the *Archiv für Religionswissenschaft*, Heft 4, 1902, criticizes Winckler's method as false in its main presupposition, viz., that the literary products of the other peoples are saturated with Babylonian influence and therefore furnish no independent history. He contends that the history of a people does not begin with their written records, but with the earliest transmitted songs and narratives, historical elements being distinguishable in folklore. Conceding that the Babylonian influence was great on the Old Testament literature of the period of the exile, and also on the people themselves in earlier times, especially in the ninth and eighth centuries, he denies *in toto* a Babylonian origin to Jewish monotheism, and rejects the hypothesis that the prophets were the agents of an outside power.

The Hebrew Conception of the Future Life.

In the *Expositor* for January Professor R. H. Charles gives a résumé of the history of the rise and development in Israel of the doctrine of a future life. He shows that the doctrine has intellectual stages, but cannot be explained on any purely natural hypothesis. Israel passed from henotheism with a limited God to monotheism with an omnipotent God, while the gloomy Sheol remained unchanged. The implicit contradiction escaped notice till the nation gave place to the individual. The doctrine grew out of communion with God, not out of logical processes simply. God thus made the doctrine verifiable by all men. Jeremiah and Ezekiel were prophets of the individual. But even the latter